Amendments to the Claims/ Listing of Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1-52. (Cancelled).

53. (New) A method for reducing the load of human Hepatitis B virus in a host organism infected with said virus, comprising administering to said host organism a nucleic acid molecule against heterogeneous nuclear ribonucleoprotein (hnRNP) K, wherein said nucleic acid molecule reduces the amount of hnRNP K in cells of the host organism, thereby reducing complex formation between hnRNP K and a regulatory region on the human Hepatitis B virus genome thereby reducing the load of human Hepatitis B virus in said infected host organism.

54. (New) The method of claim 53, wherein the host organism is a human.

55. (New) The method of claim 53, wherein the mammal is a chimpanzee.

56. (New) The method of claim 53, wherein the regulatory region is enhancer II of the human Hepatitis B virus.

57. (New) The method of claim 56, wherein the enhancer II region comprises positions 1554 to 1645 of the human Hepatitis B virus genome.

58. (New) The method of claim 53, wherein said nucleic acid molecule is RNA or DNA.

59. (New) A method for treating a human Hepatitis B infection comprising administering to a subject a compound selected from the group consisting of aptamers, micro RNA molecules, and small interfering RNA molecules, wherein viral load is reduced via reduction of complex formation between hnRNP K protein with a regulatory region on the human Hepatitis B virus genome.

60. (Withdrawn - new) The method of claim 53, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is selected from the group consisting of an aptamer, a micro RNA (miRNA) molecule and a small interfering RNA (si-RNA) molecule.

61. (Withdrawn - new) The method of claim 53, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is a si-RNA molecule comprising a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 2, SEQ ID NO: 4, SEQ ID NO: 6, SEQ ID NO: 8 and SEQ ID NO: 10.

62. (Withdrawn - new) The method according to claim 53, where the method is an in-vivo method for the identification of suitable compounds that reduce said complex formation.

63. (Withdrawn - new) The method of claim 61, further comprising measuring the number of human Hepatitis B virus particles in the host organism over a period of time.

64. (Withdrawn - new) The method of claim 62, further comprising comparing the obtained results with those of a control measurement.

65. (Withdrawn - new) The method of claim 63, wherein the control measurement comprises the use of a compound that does not reduce said complex formation.

66. (Withdrawn - new) The method of claim 63, wherein the regulatory region is enhancer II, and wherein the control measurement comprises the use of a variant of HBV that does not contain adenine at position 1752 of the virus sequence.

67. (Withdrawn - new) The method of claim 53, wherein the host organism is a recombinant microorganism expressing a hnRNP K protein.

68. (Withdrawn - new) The method of claim 66, wherein the microorganism is a cell derived from liver tissue.

69. (Withdrawn - new) The method of claim 67, wherein the cell is of or derived from a hepatocellular or a hepatoblastoma cell line.

70. (Withdrawn - new) The method of claim 68, wherein the cell line is selected from the group consisting of HepG2, Hep3B, HCCM, PLC/PRF/5, Sk-Hep-1, Snu182, HuH-6 and HuH-7.

71. (Withdrawn - new) A method for treating a human Hepatitis B infection comprising administering to a subject a compound identified by a method of claim 58, wherein the viral load is reduced via reduction of complex formation between hnRNP K protein with a regulatory region on the human Hepatitis B virus genome.